

By Staff Sgt. Marc Ayalin,
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Recruiting Hits the Mark



Command surpasses goals, ensures Corps' future

▲ **ASPEN, Colo.** – The Marine Corps is an associate sponsor of the X Games that have a strong following among 17- to 24-year-old males, the Corps' target market. In Aspen, Marine recruiters set up a booth for the first day of the 2002 Winter X Games Jan. 21, 2002. The games served as the perfect opportunity for the Corps to reach out to young people and generate visibility.

Photo by Gunnery Sgt. James Cohn



Before drill instructors can begin transforming today's youth into the Marines of tomorrow, someone has to find and recruit quality candidates. That "someone" is the Marine Corps Recruiting Command, and its enlisted recruiters have not missed an opportunity in a record-setting 100 months.

The real stars of MCRC are the Marines on the sidewalks of America, performing the toughest peacetime mission the Marine Corps has to offer," said Sgt. Maj. Jon Wertjes, MCRC's sergeant major. From July 1995 through November 2003, Marine recruiters have successfully met all assigned recruiting goals. The hard work and dedication of recruiters sustain the manpower required by the Corps and provide opportunities for young men and women to serve the nation, said Maj. Gen. Christopher Cortez, the commanding general of MCRC.

"Unlike regions that are exposed to a large military presence such as Southern California or Virginia, there are many communities whose only exposure to the Marine Corps is the recruiter," said Lt. Col. Stephen B. Wittle, head of enlisted operations for MCRC. "It's like mining the communities of America for the raw materials necessary to forge Marines," Wittle said. "They put a lot of work into representing the Marine Corps – in essence, they are testimonials to our success." Recruiters faced many challenges and changes during the 100 months, including the impact of Sept. 11, 2001,

< MARINE CORPS RECRUIT DEPOT SAN DIEGO – After their recruiter, the next Marine most prospective Marines meet is their drill instructor. One of the first things recruits learn at receiving company is the position of attention, the basic position for most drill movements.

Photo by Sgt. Ethan E. Rocke

Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom, and the pressures of a robust economy. As a result, recruiters adapted and found innovative ways to reach young men and women, and inform them about opportunities in the Marine Corps, said Sgt. Maj. Clifford Milton-Stewart, sergeant major of MCRC from 2000 to 2003.

Recruiting Support

Recruiters didn't accomplish this mission alone. The strong supporting arms of the recruiting command at the national, regional and district level helped make this possible.

"Like combat support elements in the field, recruiting support elements keep Marine recruiters in the fight," Maj. Gen. Cortez said. "Marines from administrative, financial, supply, marketing, and communications billets provided the behind the scenes muscle that powered the recruiting machine."

Hallmarks of the MCRC support structure are its flexibility and adaptability in an ever-changing recruiting environment. The command constantly seeks ways to improve its support by reviewing all aspects of how it

conducts business and how it supports the recruiters, said Michael J. Styka, assistant operations officer of enlisted operations.

Examples of these characteristics are the processing of medical waivers, which used to take eight to 10 weeks, but now, because of a re-engineered waivers process, only take three to five days; and advancements in computer technology, which play an essential role in improving efficiency and streamlining MCRC operations. Also, the use of Web-based programs and improved computer hardware enhanced recruiting station operations and efficiency by enabling recruiters to spend more time recruiting and less time doing paperwork.

One force multiplier aiding operations is the Marine Corps Recruiting Information Support System — Recruiting Station, a user-friendly Web-based system that allows Marines to track information about applicants, recruiters and recruiting organizations. The multi-user database system allows replaced the 40-year-old Automated Recruit Management System in October 2001.

> SPRINGFIELD, Mass. – Brothers Parke and Jared Stearns recite the oath of enlistment at a Military Entrance and Processing Station for Recruiting Station Springfield. The ceremony is a milestone event for those entering military service. The Stearns will be enrolled in a delayed entry program until shipping off to recruit training.

Photo by Staff Sgt. Jonathon Agee





Marine Marketing

Technological and system improvements aren't the only support elements helping the command make mission. The Corps capitalizes on the warrior ethos through posters, billboards and radio and television commercials, said Maj. Michael W. Zelif, the assistant chief of staff for marketing and public affairs. MCRC uses the enormous impact of advertising on youth to raise prospects' awareness of the Marine Corps and drive them toward the recruiters.

The release of three commercials; the development and operation of an interactive Web site; a redesign of recruiter sales tools; the partnering with a NASCAR race team; and hundreds of big rigs rolling across America with Marine Corps images on their sides helped recruiters fulfill their missions.

"We realize the decision to join the Marine Corps relies on how much a person wants to be a Marine," said Zelif. "It's our goal to help that person decide by increasing national awareness through advertising, providing recruiters with critical leads, and giving them the support materials – like information packets or posters – that they can use as sales tools."

Though some of the recruiting success may be attributed to new programs, new processes, and new advertising campaigns, recruiters continue to be the key to success. They are the

ones fighting on the frontlines during times of peace and crisis, providing the lifeblood for the Corps' future.

"The future of the Marine Corps and its success begins here in the recruiting trenches," Maj. Gen. Cortez said. "For the last 100 months, we've witnessed how Marines have shown their dedication to duty and their willingness to succeed by consistently finding the right men and women needed to sustain our ranks."

For Marines interested in volunteering for recruiting duty, visit the MCRC Web site at <https://www.mcrc.usmc.mil/main.html> and click on Join the Team for more information. **M**

▲ SPARTA, Ky. – The No. 25 Team Marines Ford Taurus dominated the Busch Series Meijer 300 at the Kentucky Speedway in June 2003. The partnership with Team Rensi Motorsports and the Marine Corps' involvement with NASCAR continues to be one of the Marine Corps' most visible and exciting marketing programs.

Photo by Sgt. Jimmie Perkins

SURPASSING THE RECRUITING GOAL				
	Contracting Mission	Attained	Shipping Mission	Attained
Aug - Sep 1995	7,238	7,238	7,391	7,391
FY 96	37,791	39,792	39,465	39,484
FY 97	37,791	39,792	40,369	40,716
FY 98	37,719	37,732	40,325	40,366
FY 99	36,860	36,938	39,414	39,503
FY 00	39,206	39,412	38,393	38,574
FY 01	37,979	38,659	37,220	37,335
FY 02	38,577	39,486	38,641	38,668
FY 03	36,405	37,684	38,659	38,685

Elements of Success



Recruiters are the front-line troops in the recruiting battle. They spend long hours every day searching their areas for qualified prospects interested in becoming Marines.



"I can't stand to lose so that pushes me to try even harder to be successful. If you believe in the Marine Corps and you are motivated, it will reflect on you," said Gunnery Sgt. Jessie W. Cornelius, the 2002 Marine Corps Recruiter of the Year and the staff noncommissioned officer in charge for Recruiting Sub-Station West Indianapolis, Ind.

Staff noncommissioned officers in charge manage the home base—the recruiting sub-stations. They are responsible for attaining mission and the overall management of RSS operations as well as maximizing prospecting activities, improving recruiter sales techniques and performance, and monitoring interactions with the applicants from initial contact to shipping to recruit training.



"I don't let the recruiters forget who they are or where they come from – they are United States Marines," said Gunnery Sgt. Gregory M. Cramer, the 2002 Recruiting SNCOIC of the year.

Career recruiters are additional weapons in the Recruiting Command's arsenal. They serve as a cadre of professional recruiters with long-term assignments in key leadership billets. They improve the management and effectiveness of the recruiting effort. As recruiting command billets rotate, career recruiters provide continuity and institutional knowledge.



"(Career recruiters) keep the recruiting train on the tracks when commanding officers, executive officers and sergeants major come and go," said Master Gunnery Sgt. Ronald E. Pruitt, who is head of enlisted operations and a career recruiter. **M**

RECRUITING: THE NUMBERS GAME*

10 - Average number of phone calls to get one contact

7 - Average number of contacts to get one appointment

4 - Average number of appointments to get one interview

4 - Average number of interviews to get one contract

3000 - Average number of phone calls a recruiter makes per month

8411 - The MOS designator for recruiters

2841 - Number of recruiters currently assigned to MCRC

8412 - The MOS designator for career recruiters

438 - Number of career recruiters assigned to MCRC

3,279 - Number of recruiters as of October 2003

577 - Number of Recruiting Sub-Stations

48 - Number of Recruiting Station Headquarters

* Numbers provided by the Marine Corps Recruiting Command

100 Months of Numbers

More than 8,000 Marine recruiters have enlisted between 36,000 to 39,000 applicants a year during the 100-month period. This adds up to more than 320,000 quality men and women. Recruiters shipped nearly 327,000 applicants to the two recruit depots. At the same time, the Marine Corps consistently exceeded the Department of Defense standard that 90% of all enlistees be accredited high school diploma recipients. Nearly 97% of Marine Corps applicants recruited were high school graduates.